

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 INT-05 EB-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OES-07 EUR-12 COME-00 /098 W
-----101288 141336Z /41

R 140927Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7983
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 3889

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PINR, AF
SUBJECT: THE NEW AFGHAN CABINET: MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES,
ENGINEER MOHAMMAD ISMA'IL DANESH

1. AT 38, THE NEW MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES IS A SHORT, BALD MAN, SLIGHTLY PUDGY, WHO PEERS OWLISHLY AT HIS VISITORS THROUGH HORN-RIM GLASSES. I MET HIM IN HIS OFFICE WITH THE E/C COUNSELOR FOR A PLEASANT HALF-HOUR SESSION ON MAY 13. DANESH SPEAKS EXCELLENT ENGLISH AND NO AFGHAN INTERPRETER OR NOTE TAKER WAS PRESENT. HE HAS A SOLID TECHNICAL BACKGROUND, HAVING TAKEN A BS IN COAL MINING ENGINEERING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST VIRGINIA AND AN MS IN PHYSICS IN THE SOVIET UNION.

2. DANESH WAS NOT PREPARED TO GET INTO SPECIFIC BUSINESS DETAILS. THE MINISTRY, HE SAID, IS PUTTING TOGETHER PLANS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MINERALS EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION --AND IS ALSO LOOKING AT THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO ORGANIZE ITS OPERATIONS -- BUT THESE EFFORTS ARE STILL IN THE INITIAL STAGE. I EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION BUT NOTED THAT I HAD TWO ITEMS WHICH I WANTED TO BRING TO HIS EARLY ATTENTION, THE KANDAHAR CEMENT PLANT AND THE PENDING CONTRACT WITH CITIES SERVICE FOR OIL EXPLORATION. DANESH
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WAS ALREADY AWARE OF THE CEMENT PLANT PROJECT. HE SAID IT WAS UNDER ACTIVE REVIEW, BUT THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE SOME TIME BEFORE ANY DECISION WAS MADE. HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH US WHEN PLANS FOR THIS PROJECT HAD BEEN STUDIED AND SORTED OUT. (REMARKS ON CITIES SERVICE HAVE BEEN REPORTED SEPTTEL.)

3. DANESH INDICATED THAT THE TWO NEW DEPUTY MINISTERS HAD BEEN APPOINTED: GHULAM MOHAMAD RAHIMI FOR INDUSTRIES AND ENG. ABDUL KAFI (QAFI) RASSOULI FOR MINES. BOTH ARE LONG-TERM (BUT RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL) EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY, RAHIMI HAVING SERVED IN THE TECHNICAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND RASSOULI IN CEMENT PRODUCTION.

4. COMMENT: DANESH HAS A GOOD EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND FOR HIS JOB BUT, LIKE MOST OF THE CABINET, NO EXPERIENCE IN MANAGEMENT. THUS, THE LACK OF TRAINED MANPOWER, MANAGERIAL AND TECHNICAL, WHICH PLAGUED THE DAOUD REGIME, MAY BE EVEN MORE ACUTELY FELT BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT.
ELIOT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, MINING, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, MINISTERS (DIPLOMATS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KABUL03889
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780204-0831
Format: TEL
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780560/aaaabzdo.tel
Line Count: 75
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bca21c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2697563
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE NEW AFGHAN CABINET: MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES, ENGINEER MOHAMMAD ISMA'IL DANESH
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PINR, AF, (ADNESH, MOHAMMAD ISMA'IL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bca21c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014